

**MINUTES OF THE ILLINOIS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION
MEDICAL FEE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
JAMES R. THOMPSON CENTER, 100 WEST RANDOLPH STREET – ROOM 9-034
HELD ON OCTOBER 18, 2011 at 2:00 PM**

Present at the meeting were:

Chairman Mitch Weisz
Mr. John Smolk, United Airlines
Mr. Bill McAndrew, Illinois Hospital Association
Ms. Barb Molloy, Molloy Consulting
Dr. Michael Vender, Hand Surgery Associates
Mr. Jason Keller, Illinois AFL-CIO
Ms. Dianne McGuire, College of DuPage Board of Trustees

Participating via telephone were:

Mr. Glen Boyle, Project Manager
Dr. Avi Bernstein, The Spine Center
Ms. Kimberly Moreland, Rising Medical Solutions

IWCC staff present at the meeting were:

Ms. Susan Piha, Manager of Research and Education
Ms. Kim Janas, Secretary of the Commission
Mr. Darrell Widen, Assistant General Counsel

Also present at the meeting were:

Ms. Cathi Roger, WCGuru.com
Ms. Ann Bresnen, Orthocentrix Solutions, LLC
Mr. David B. Menchetti
Ms. Valeri McGregor, Startacare, LLC
Mr. Tim O'Connell, Automated Healthcare Solutions
Mr. Tom Suffredin, Chicago Bar Association
Mr. Michael Blixen, HFN, Inc.
Ms. Liz Kerr, HFN, Inc.
Mr. Mark Blakemore, Coventry
Dr. Andrew J. Engel, MPSS
Mr. Ted Whalen, DOI
Mr. Matt Hillison, Concentra
Ms. Megan Karlic, Concentra
Ms. Mary Gjondla, Hemii
Ms. Terri Robinson, NCCI
Mr. Gary Wagner, Corvel
Ms. Daniella Watson, Corvel
Mr. Darren Stahulak, Corvel
D. Jon F. Michkovits, Advocate
Ms. Liz Jeltema, Consultant
Ms. Donna Kersting, Hand Surgery Associates

Chairman Mitch Weisz called the meeting order to at 2:00 pm and noted that a quorum was present. Upon motion by Dr. Vender, seconded by Mr. Smolk, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the Medical Fee Advisory Board meeting held on September 20, 2011 were approved.

Chairman Weisz started the meeting by reviewing the decision to collapse the Geozips of the Medical Fee Schedule by a straight averaging approach.

Chairman Weisz then asked the Medical Fee Advisory Board for feedback regarding several issues affecting the Medical Fee Schedule that had been brought to the Commission's attention. The Board discussed the issue that some E & M codes (evaluation and management) may be reimbursed at rates less than Medicare, which would potentially cause an access to care issue for injured workers. Chairman Weisz asked that the Board keep aware of this issue as a potential problem for the Medical Fee Schedule.

The next Medical Fee Schedule issue discussed was whether the default 53.2% rate was affecting access to care to adult diapers because the reduction in the default pricing code has reduced the reimbursement for this product below cost. The Board discussed possible reasons why this particular medical device was specifically affected by the reduction of the previous default rate to 53.2%.

The Board also discussed the impact of the default fee schedule rate on emergency room services and the possible impact to providers of these services. Mr. Glen Boyle offered to meet with the hospital provider community to discuss possible fee schedule penetration in the area of emergency services.

Chairman Weisz also alerted the Board to concerns voiced by providers of physical therapy in northern Illinois regarding the impact on reimbursement rates with the collapsing of the Geozips as mandated by House Bill 1698.

A draft copy of the Instructions and Guidelines for the Medical Fee Schedule that was prepared by Glen Boyle was also distributed to the Board.

Ms. Molloy then raised an issue regarding the "outlier" provision for reimbursement rates in the Medical Fee Schedule. She stated that with the reduction of the default rate in the fee schedule to 53.2%, this impacted the current outlier provision to potentially produce more billed services as outliers, meaning that they would be subject to an increased reimbursement. The Board discussed the current rule and whether the changes to the Medical Fee Schedule in House Bill 1698 impacted the outlier rule.

Chairman Weisz also addressed the specific forms on which these Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Centers are billed and also how billing can be affected depending on whether a hospital-affiliated entity bills under a hospital Tax Identification Number.

Chairman Weisz then shared with the Board that the Commission had produced a final draft of the Notice of Preferred Provider Program, which is the document that the employer would supply to the employee upon notification of a workplace injury to alert him or her of the existence of the employer's PPP for the treatment of work-related injuries. Chairman Weisz also distributed a suggested form that employers that could voluntarily use to initially inform employees of the existence of a PPP before an employee incurred a workplace injury. The Board discussed some of the specific wording of the mandatory form and offered some suggestions to make it less redundant.

Finally, the Board discussed and finalized plans for a meeting on December 7th at 2:00 pm instead of a previously scheduled meeting on December 13th.

With a motion to adjourn made by Mr. McAndrew, seconded by Mr. Keller, and unanimously carried, the Medical Fee Advisory Board adjourned at 3:40 pm.